

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 JIDDA 03708 251513Z

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-03 /014 W

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R 251410Z MAY 75

FM AMEMBASSY JIDDA

TO SECDEF WASHDC

INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 1342

SANG-PMO RIYADH

C O N F I D E N T I A L JIDDA 3708

FOR : DEPSECDEF CLEMENTS

E.O.: 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR, MASS, SA

SUBJ: STATUS OF SANG PROJECT MANAGER

1. IT HAS COME TO MY ATTENTION THAT COLONEL LAWRENCE, BECAUSE OF HIS PROMOTION TO BRIGADIER GENERAL EFFECTIVE 1 JUNE, MAY BE GIVEN OTHER DUTIES IMMEDIATELY, OR, IF ALLOWED TO STAY, MAY NOT BE PERMITTED TO COMPLETE A TWO-YEAR TOUR AS SANG PROJECT MANAGER.

2. EITHER DEVELOPMENT WOULD BE DISTURBING. I WENT TO GREAT EFFORT TO SMOOTH THE TRANSITION BETWEEN COLONEL MORT AND COLONEL LAWRENCE. I POINTED OUT THAT COLONEL LAWRENCE HAD BEEN PERSONALLY SELECTED BY YOU AND THAT YOU BELIEVED HE WAS THE BEST MAN FOR THE JOB. I BELIEVE COLONEL LAWRENCE HAS BEEN ACCEPTED BY THE GUARD AND HAS TAKEN HOLD RAPIDLY. HE DOES INDEED SEEM TO BE EXCELLENT, AND I BELIEVE HE SHOULD STAY ON FOR THE FULL TWO YEARS. AS YOU KNOW, CONTINUITY OF LEADERSHIP IS EXTREMELY IMPORTANT IN SAUDI ARABIA, WHERE PERSONAL ACCEPTANCE IS CRITICAL TO JOB PERFORMANCE.

3. IF A TWO YEAR ASSIGNMENT IS NOT POSSIBLE, THEN (AS THE LESSER OF TWO EVILS) I WOULD PREFER TO HAVE COLONEL LAWRENCE REMOVED IMMEDIATELY. THIS WOULD HAVE SERIOUS EFFECTS IN THE SHORT TERM, BUT WOULD BE LESS DANAGING IN MY VIEW THAN TO HAVE TO CHANGE PROJECT MANAGERS A YEAR FROM NOW.

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4. COLONEL LAWRENCE'S RETENTION WOULD ALSO RAISE THE QUESTION OF THE RANK OF HIS REPLACEMENT. I AM PLEASED THAT THE NATIONAL GUARD WOULD HAVE A GENERAL OFFICER AS ITS PROGRAM MANAGER, BUT IF HE IS TO BE SUCCEDED BY A COLONEL I BELIEVE THE GUARD WOULD REACT WITH THE VIEW THAT THE US WAS AT THAT TIME DOWNGRADING THE IMPORTANCE OF THE GUARD PROGRAM. THUS IT WOULD BE NECESSARY THAT HE BE REPLACED BY A GENERAL OFFICER.

5. THIS MATTER REQUIRES IMMEDIATE ACTION, PARTICULARLY SINCE PRINCE ABDULLAH IS SCHEDULED TO HOST A PINNING-ON PROMOTION CEREMONY FOR COLONEL LAWRENCE ON 1 JUNE. IF COLONEL LAWRENCE IS NOT GOING TO REMAIN IN THE JOB, THE CEREMONY SHOULD NOT BE HELD. SINCE PRINCE ABDULLAH PERSONALLY OFFERED TO HOST IT (AN UNPRECEDENTED MOVE) COLONEL LAWRENCE CANNOT REASONABLE CANCEL OUT. THEREFORE I SUGGEST, IF HE IS NOT TO REMAIN ON THE JOB, HE BE CALLED OUT OF THE COUNTRY, PERHAPS FOR CONSULTATIONS, BEFORE THAT DATE.

AKINS

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